

# WOMEN AND CO-OPERATIVES

By

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Faith Jabulile Nomfundiso Tame and student number 213388243, hereby declare that the treatise for the Degree of Masters in Development Studies is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another University or for another qualification.

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Faith Jabulile Nomfundiso Tame

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## **ABSTRACT**

In this study, “Women and Cooperatives”, the researcher was interested in finding out whether women cooperatives contributed towards development of women and poverty reduction in Sarah Baartman District Municipality between 2004 and 2014. The study was conducted with three cooperatives situated in Makana Local Municipality, Sarah Baartman District Municipality and Eastern Cape Province. The cooperatives studied focused on sewing, poultry and agriculture. The study was explorative in nature as it was aimed at assessing the effectiveness of women cooperatives in empowering women, the effectiveness of women cooperatives in reducing poverty and to make recommendations regarding what can be done to address the challenges identified in the study.

The qualitative research method was applied when conducting this study. Eight respondents from each cooperative were willing to take part and this led to a total of twenty-four respondents who participated. The questions asked were based on the interview schedule developed by the researcher.

The results of the study and the recommendations indicated that more commitment from the government is required and the following key aspects should be taken into account when considering a development program:

- Infrastructure
- Availability of funding
- Access to resources
- Skills development
- Provision of basic services

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

SASSA – South African Social Security Agency

CEDAW - Convention of the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

RDP - Reconstruction and Development Program

SGI - Shared Growth Initiative

ASGI–SA - Accelerated Strategy for Growth and Initiative-South Africa

BBBEE - Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment

IFAA – Institute for African Alternatives

NGOs – Non-governmental Organizations

UNECE – United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

DTI – Department of Trade and Industry

EPWP – Extended Public Works Program

FET – Further Education and Training

NSFAS – National Student Financial Aid Scheme

SPCA – Society for the Protection and Care of Animals

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

### 1. Background

Women play a critical role in shaping the economy of their households and their communities. In rural areas of South Africa, they take part in crop production, caring for livestock and they also provide food, water and fuel for their families. They are typically the primary caregivers to children, older persons and the sick.

Despite the vital functions they carry out, the lives of women are still characterized by extreme poverty, due to a number of socio-economic factors such as unemployment and access to basic services. They still suffer from gender-based stereotypes, discrimination, exclusion from employment opportunities, lack of reproductive resources and inaccessible income-generating projects.

Over ten million women in South Africa depend on social grants<sup>1</sup> as their means of living and ninety-six percent of grant beneficiaries are women. The grants are rendered under the social security system and administered by the office of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). The social grants contribute significantly towards the empowerment of women in disadvantaged communities. Women develop decision-making and household power over financial matters in their families (Fact Sheet and Guides, 2015)

However, the gap created by unemployment cannot be closed by reliance on Social grants alone. Haarman (2000) argues that the Social Security System is not enough for successful economic growth and development, especially in a country with high unemployment levels and inequality like South Africa. Women, therefore, need to identify their challenges and strive for better economic emancipation by utilizing the opportunities that are available.

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<sup>1</sup> Social grants are administered through the South African government's social security system. They are targeted at specific populations with the aim of reducing poverty and increasing economic growth and development (Samson, MacQuene and van Niekerk).

Mohamed (2016) describes South Africa's Constitution as being the most progressive in the world with respect to human rights. Chapter 2 of the Constitution, The Bill of Rights, comprises of a long list of socio-economic rights which are aimed at overcoming the legacy of all types of oppression and discrimination. In the Bill of Rights, the state is given an obligation to respect, protect, promote and fulfill these rights. Among these rights are the rights to equality, to own property and the right for women to be whatever they want to be, including the right for them to participate in economic development programs (Oechsli C and Walker D, 2015).

In addition, the constitution has entered into a number of international human rights declarations, such as the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), The Beijing Platform for Action (which seeks to advance gender equality), and the Maputo Declaration on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (African Union Gender Policy, 2009).

When the new government of National Unity came into power after 1994 first democratic elections, extensive policy reforms and strategies to transform the society were introduced. Some of those strategies were the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), the Shared Growth Initiative (SGI), the Accelerated Strategy for Growth and Initiative-South Africa (ASGI-SA), and other strategies developed by the several government departments in order to address the issues of poverty and gender inequality in South Africa (Knight, 2001).

### **1.1 Reconstruction and Development Programme**

The RDP was aimed at addressing a number of social and economic problems facing the country. A key aspect of the RDP was that it linked reconstruction and development. "The RDP recognized that all problems (lack of housing, a shortage of jobs, inadequate education and health care, a falling economy) are connected. It proposed job creation through public works - the building of houses and provision of services would be done in a way that created employment" (Knight, 2001).

## **1.2 Shared Growth Initiative-South Africa and ASGI-SA 2004-2014**

Shared Growth Initiative-South Africa and Accelerated Strategy for Growth and Initiative-South Africa (ASGI-SA) 2004-2014 were adopted by the government to supplement the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy in 2004, after realizing that the GEAR<sup>2</sup> did not meet the expected outcomes. A key component of ASGI-SA was the industrial strategy called Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE<sup>3</sup>). BBBEE was characterized by the training and integration of black people to be entrepreneurs in the business sector by allowing them to access credit and other facilities. BBBEE created many black entrepreneurs, although it was also criticized for creating a new elite instead of advancing democracy and bringing resources to the poor (Makhunga, 2008).

## **1.3 The Integrated Service Delivery Strategy – Department of Social Development**

In reaching out to millions of South Africans who live in poverty and lack basic services, there has been a transformation within South Africa's Department of Social Development, from a welfare approach to a social development perspective. This paradigm shift was based on the idea that, instead of helping people in a traditional way by giving them the handouts, citizens should be developed and empowered so that they become self-reliant (The Integrated Service Delivery Strategy - Department of Social Development, 2009). The basic aim of this new approach was to combat the country's socio-economic challenges by strengthening the system through which services are rendered. The Department of Social Development hoped to work more closely with

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<sup>2</sup> GEAR was a government strategy comprising of a package of policies that were aimed at accelerating the implementation of the existing policies. (Chikulo, 2003)

<sup>3</sup> BBBEE was an instrument identified by ASGI-SA to create and increase opportunities for black enterprise. (Auditor General: South Africa).

other stakeholders who promote social justice in order to achieve the goal of “a better life for all”<sup>4</sup>. The department renders services through three broad programs: Social Security, Social Welfare and Community Development (The Integrated Service Delivery Strategy - Department of Social Development, 2009).

### **1.3.1 Community Development Programme**

Of the initiatives that emerged from the Department of Social Development’s new approach, the one most relevant to this research paper is the Community Development Programme. The programme employs a process aimed at capacitating the community to respond to their needs and improve their lives. One of the essential elements of community development is the mobilization and provision of resources and the creation of access to opportunities that encourage self-help initiatives for mutual benefit (The Integrated Service Delivery Strategy - Department of Social Development, 2009).

Women are among the target groups for the programme, particularly vulnerable women who are victims of violence and/or are poor and/or unemployed. The scope of the programme’s services includes socio-economic development and empowerment of women.

Some of the socio-economic development programmes in South Africa are: promoting gender equality, facilitation of development centres, and promotion and facilitation of cooperatives (The Integrated Service Delivery Strategy - Department of Social Development, 2009).

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<sup>4</sup> “A better life for all” is an African National Congress slogan of the 1994 elections.

## 1.4 The Research Problem

The researcher has set out to determine whether the cooperatives led by women have contributed to the development of women and poverty reduction in South Africa. The research focuses specifically on Sarah Baartman District Municipality, Eastern Cape, between 2004 and 2014.

## 1.5 The Socio-economic Situation of Sarah Baartman District Municipality

The research was conducted at Sarah Baartman District Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. The district comprises of nine local municipalities: Makana, Ndlambe, Kouga, Blue Crane, Baavians, Sundays River Valley, Koukamma, Camdeboo, and Ikhwezi. According to the Sarah Baartman District Municipality Integrated Development Plan 2012-2017, the area is known for its large commercial farms, its nature reserves and its old-fashioned towns. It is also sparsely populated, with about seven people per square kilometre.

The profile released by the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council Report 2014 indicates that the rate of poverty in this district is high. It is estimated that 126 000 people live in poverty in the area. The illiteracy rate is also high, with eighteen percent of the population being functionally illiterate. The report released the number of 176 678 people who were economically active in 2013, which is 46% of the district population. The employment rate is gradually declining as more people get informal employment in the region. The majority of the economic opportunities in the area are found in the following sectors:

- **Agriculture** – Citrus (Sundays River and Gamtoos), deciduous (Langkloof), pineapple and chicory (Port Alfred, Alexandria), dairy, beef, game farming, wool and mohair.
- **Mining and minerals** – Grahamstown has deposits of good quality kaolin and Jansenville has Gypsum.

- **Construction** – Wind farm construction, development of small towns, development of coasts and development of a nuclear plant near Cape St. Francis.
- **Tourism** – Beaches, surfing, Tsitsikamma National Park, Grahamstown Arts Festival, hunting, Valley of Desolation and others (Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council Report, 2014).

The same report also revealed that there has been a downward trend in serious crime since 2004. However, there were exceptions for certain types of crime, such as driving under the influence of alcohol or other substances, substance-related crimes and sexual crimes. Due to the increased use of substances, evidence of additional social challenges, such as HIV/AIDS, child abuse and neglect, and domestic violence, have become prevalent (Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council Report, 2014).

## **1.6 Research Aims and Objectives**

The aims and objectives of this research are as follows:

- Assess the effectiveness of Women Cooperatives in empowering women.
- Assess the effectiveness of Women Cooperatives in reducing poverty.
- To make recommendations on what can be done to address the challenges identified in the study.

With the number of economic opportunities in the district and the government policies and strategies discussed above, the researcher seeks to find out why South Africans remain concerned about the socio-economic challenges faced by women, in Sarah Baartman District Municipality specifically, and in South Africa generally.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Defining a Cooperative**

According to the report by Prudence Khumalo (2014), a cooperative is defined as an autonomous group of people who have met voluntarily for a common economic need through a democratically controlled enterprise. Cooperatives play a crucial role in poverty reduction, employment generation, and social integration. The principles that guide cooperative organizations are:

- They are self-help organizations that are democratically owned by members.
- Representatives account to members and are elected by members based on equal voting.
- Members' contribution of capital is equal (Khumalo, 2014, p.63).

The United Nations Development Program, as quoted by Erskine (1985), defines development as “a change involving the transformation of agrarian society in order to reach a common set of development goals on capacity and needs of people. These goals include a nationally determined growth process that gives priority to the reduction of poverty, unemployment and inequality, and the satisfaction of minimum human needs and stresses self-reliance and participation of all people, particularly those with the lowest standard of living” (Erskine, 1985, p.370).

### **2.2 Poverty Alleviation/Relief Programmes**

Henriot (2002) mentions that most of the time, development experts and organizations tend to use the terms alleviation and relief interchangeably and synonymously in relation to poverty, although that is not the case. He outlines the meanings as:

- Poverty alleviation - meeting the pressing needs of the society with welfare hand-outs and social security, providing safety nets for widows, orphans, the elderly and the handicapped. This is basically charitable.
- Poverty reduction - the task of lowering the numbers of those living below the poverty line and eliminating them from the statistics of the deprived. This involves providing people with jobs that provide a living wage, providing health and education services, providing credit for small business enterprises and other opportunities to rise above the poverty line. This is commitment to development.

In south Africa, a poverty reduction program was initiated in the 1997/1998 financial year when the government decided to set aside R300 million to address poverty directly, focusing mainly on providing short-term employment opportunities. This program focused on access to economic opportunities for specific target groups mainly women, youth, the elderly, disabled and HIV/AIDS orphans and child-headed families. The document states that people on the ground know best what is needed in their communities. Every person in South Africa has the right and a chance to suggest poverty reduction initiatives. In that way, they will be able to own the project towards sustainability. (Department of Social Development Business plan 2001/2002).

May (2002), argues that poverty reduction strategies are aimed at breaking the structural forces that cause poverty through the achievement of economic growth and human development, enhancing the capacities of disadvantaged individuals, households and communities and through the distributive social development interventions.

## **2.3 The Empowerment of Women**

Singh and Titi ( eds) (1995) describe empowerment as “the ability for a person, female or male to interpret her or his situation and make informed choices and decisions affecting individuals, families and the community as a whole”.

Women empowerment refers to the process whereby women are able to interpret their own situation (social, economic and political) and “to identify the desired changes that they would like to make and go ahead to make those changes in their lives, family and community and positively benefit from those changes” (Kabeer, 2001: 83). That is, they are able to take control of their social, economic and political destiny.

Women empowerment is different from the empowerment of other disadvantaged or socially excluded groups because women are not just one among several disempowered sub-populations; “instead they are a cross-cutting category of individuals that overlaps each of these other groups” (Malhotra and Mather, 1997: 75).

Mayoux (1989, 1995) describes the prospects, but mostly problems, associated with women-focused economic empowerment efforts. Mayoux argues that administrative mistakes, governmental interference, and bad planning can hinder or sometimes doom, women's initiatives

## **2.4 History of Women Cooperatives in Africa**

According to the report of the conference held at The Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA) in 1988, the history of cooperatives' development differs from country to country. The economic and political framework in which these cooperatives operate also varies between countries. Cooperatives are also different in their historical origins, aims, functions and internal organization, even within the countries in which they operate (Mayoux, 1988, p.3).

The IFAA report also states that, in Africa, women have rarely benefitted from development projects. The systems in place have tended to exclude them. Women's projects were not integrated into the mainstream of economic development. In the past women's contribution to the economy was totally disregarded. The top-down approach to development resulted in women's unpaid workload and their rights to land and property being denied, leading to serious consequences for their health and the health of children (Mayoux, 1988, p.3).

Throughout South African history, women have played prominent roles in traditional forms of cooperative activities such as mutual assistance and village festivals. Cooperatives formally organized under South Africa's Constitution have only been introduced in the last few decades. In most countries, there has been some state involvement in women cooperative programmes. This included provisions for credit, training and marketing facilities. In socialist countries, cooperatives have been state programs aimed at delivering social services and agricultural development programs to rural people (Mayoux, 1988, pp.3, 5-9).

The administration of cooperative development in some countries has been labeled as being top-heavy, inefficient, controlled by urban middle class bureaucracy or rural elite with its own interests, characterized by over-staffing, high salaries, lack of accountability, and corruption, which is against the interests of the members. In many cases, the advantages of the cooperation have not been made clear to the participants and, in other cases the benefits for participants do not actually exist (Mayoux, 1988, pp.3, 5-9).

A report on the conference held in Addis Ababa in 1989, which was a follow-up to the conference held in 1988, mentioned that some women's movements and governments promoted cooperatives as ideal types of development projects for Third World countries during the 1980s. In many African countries, rural or urban, women regarded cooperatives as important in increasing their status and income in the community (Mayoux et al, 1989, p.3).

The report also states that cooperative development projects for women should be seen as wider community development strategies rather than as isolated projects. Thus, the ultimate goal of cooperative development for women should be to contribute to national economic development, ensuring that women are fully involved and that they benefit from their projects (Mayoux et al, 1989, p.12).

## **2.5 Factors Affecting Sustainability of Women Cooperatives**

Samiti (2006) and Tan and Young (2000) highlighted two broad factors that affect the economic development of women. These are social factors and economic factors. Social factors include lack of social acceptability due to the fact that society marginalizes women while economic factors are: competition in the market, lack of access to the market, lack of access to raw materials, lack of capital or finance, lack of marketing skills, poor infrastructure, and lack of business training.

The social factors can be attributed to gender-specific barriers that include gender-based discrimination, as well as sexual stereotyping, that undermine women's educational and occupational prospects. These also contribute to their concentration in low growth sectors, their limited business and management skills, and the unequal division of household labour. Gender differences emanating from the processes of socialization also contribute to the psychological effects on women, such as low assertiveness and low self-confidence. These are the characteristics that hinder the success of development (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe 2004).

The recommendations of the IFAA conference held in Addis Ababa in 1989 highlighted some support structures that need to be taken into consideration when addressing the issue of women cooperatives. They are:

### **2.5.1 Training**

Investment in training is needed, as it is seen as a development in general. The skills acquired can be carried over into other activities, even if the particular cooperative has failed. Diversification of skills is required to allow for flexibility, which can result in new products, use of alternative types of raw materials and can enable women to respond to the frequent market demand and supply changes (Mayoux et al, 1989, p.14).

### **2.5.2 Access to finance/credit**

Lack of credit hinders development of women's initiatives. In many countries, there is actually no legislation that prevents women from getting credit, yet it is hard for them to do so. This is because, most of the time, women do not have any security, such as land or property. Governments and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have a responsibility to assist in the removal of formal discrimination and to act as intermediaries between women and credit institutions (Mayoux et al, 1989, p.15).

### **2.5.3 Marketing**

Marketing should be taken as a central, rather than as a parasitic or peripheral, aspect to women cooperatives. Sales promotion, market research, and advertising are some of the activities involved in marketing. Failure in marketing results in failure of the cooperative project (Mayoux et al, 1989, p.16).

To be able to tap into the new market, a person needs to have expertise, skills, and the right contacts. Most of the time, women lack the skills to participate in the market place and lack the strategy to market their products. They are also not exposed to the international market and have limited knowledge of what is in demand internationally (UNECE 2004).

In her research on socio-economic benefits and limitations of rural settlement projects, Kuwe-Bamanyisa (2002) states that all the participants in her research mentioned they needed training in the following areas:

- Technical skills for commercial farming and sustainable land use.
- Project management and marketing of produce.
- Financial management and record keeping.
- Conflict resolution

( Kuwe-Bamanyisa, 2002, p.50).

In an International Conference on Population and Development held in Kenya in 1994, the United Nations Population Fund reported that women are generally the poorest members of society, even though they play a key role in development processes. Empowering them towards autonomy and improving their lives and social, political, cultural, economic and health status is of high importance when eradicating poverty (United Nations Population Fund 2014).

According to a study conducted by the International Labour Organization in East Africa, cooperatives are seen as a model to develop women's economic and social needs, due to the fact that women have been disadvantaged in terms of opportunities and resources. However, due to political and socio-cultural circumstances, women remain under-represented and, as such, cooperative advantage does not meet its full potential (International Labour Organization, 2009).

The main findings of the study show that the under-representation is not reflected in the membership levels only, but also in terms of the number of employees and on the level of leadership. There is also some evidence that women do not benefit to the same extent as men in some of the services rendered by the cooperatives. In addition to the limited number of women in cooperatives, limits on their capital base, weak connections to input suppliers and markets, limited access and control over financial resources and physical resources (access to land), lower levels of education and cultural perceptions, are some of the additional factors that impact negatively on women's ability to

effectively participate in cooperative programs (International Labour Organization, 2009).

However, Kuwe-Bamanyisa (2002), in her discussion of the case of Ntselamanzi Irrigation Project, Alice, Eastern Cape, reported that the female representation in the project was quite fair, as women constituted fifty percent. They were also recognized in terms of making decisions by virtue of being elected to serve on the committee (Kuwe-Bamanyisa, 2002, p.52).

## **2.6 Development of Women Cooperatives in South Africa**

In 2004, South Africa developed the first cooperative policy that addressed all types of cooperative sectors. Black-owned cooperatives came into being, making a shift beyond agricultural to construction, transport, manufacturing, services, housing, and information technology. Since the policy's inception, 2 766 new cooperatives have been registered, representing a 66 percent growth (Department of Trade and Industry, Integrated Strategy on Development and Promotion of Cooperatives 2012).

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has been mandated to develop and lead all programs that promote cooperatives in all economic sectors in South Africa. The document on Integrated Strategy on Development and Promotion of Cooperatives, 2012, referred to as the "Strategy", is the government's commitment to the promotion of cooperatives over the next ten years, from 2012 to 2022 (Department of Trade and Industry, Integrated Strategy on Development and Promotion of Cooperatives 2012).

Given the abovementioned circumstances, it appears that a number of issues have constrained the development of women in most parts of Africa. A patriarchal mindset is still visible in many societies. Do governments have to play an active role in facilitating change through policies? These are some of the questions this study seeks to address.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

As the researcher has already indicated in the problem statement, the focus was in finding out whether women cooperatives contributed to development and poverty reduction in South Africa's Sarah Baartman District Municipality between 2004 and 2014. This chapter presents the design, methodology, and procedure used to conduct the study. It is subdivided into the following sections: (i) research method; (ii) research instruments; (iii) focus groups; (iv) ethical considerations; (v) sampling method; (vi) the data collecting process followed; (vii) variables investigated; and (viii) challenges.

### **3.2 Research method**

The researcher used the qualitative research design. According to Blanche and Durrheim (1999), qualitative research is naturalistic<sup>5</sup> and holistic<sup>6</sup>. It is suitable when the researcher seeks to allow a study phenomenon to unfold in a real world situation, without manipulation.

This design allowed the researcher to understand the phenomenon from the perspective of the persons studied, including the participants' explanation of their experience from their own point of view. Data collected through this research design was in the form of spoken language.

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<sup>5</sup> Naturalistic research studies real world situations as they unfold without manipulation. This allows for openness to whatever may emerge during the study Blanche & Durrheim, 1999.

<sup>6</sup> Holistic research is characterised by giving attention to important connections between the philosophical framework and the methods employed. This means that the whole phenomenon under study is understood as a complex system that is more than the sum of its parts (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

Qualitative data can be gathered by four main data collection methods: in-depth interviewing, focus groups, observing directly, and document analysis. Focus groups were used in this study. Since the participants are from the same background and therefore have common characteristics, the researcher believed that they will feel at ease to give information and express their views freely (Jerry, Thomas, Nelson & Silverman 2015).

#### **3.3.1 Interviews**

The researcher used semi-structured interviews. Interviews are the predominant mode of data collection in qualitative research. Some scholars are of the opinion that the researcher conducts interviews because of an interest in other people's stories and experiences. Stories comprise of everything that people know or have experienced in their lives, such as feelings, people, relationships, time, ideas, sequences, events, and memories, and these are the aspects that inform the quality of the study (De Vos et al 2005, p.287). Semi-structured interviews provide an opportunity to ask several key questions that help define the areas to be explored. The participants get guidance on what to talk about, which many find helpful (British Dental Journal, 2008, p.204, 291–295).

An interview schedule was used in this study for the collection of data. The interview schedule was created in English and translated to, and administered in isiXhosa, as most of the respondents have a limited educational level and are not fluent in English. The interview schedule enabled the interviewer to probe the respondents' verbal and non-verbal cues and to give clarity where necessary. The interview schedule consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions. Face-to-face interviews ensured flexibility and, at the same time, allowed the researcher to observe and use her own clarification where necessary.

### **3.3.2 Focus Groups**

A focus group is a group discussion that is organized by the researcher for a research purpose on a particular research topic. Focus groups are interviews which are meant to get a better understanding of how people feel and think about an issue. Participants with a common characteristic are selected (De Vos et al 2005, p.299).

The researcher held separate focus groups of five to ten participants. In this study, the respondents were groups of women who were in cooperatives. These were already existing groups and the participants enjoyed the benefit of being familiar with each other and were therefore comfortable and felt comfortable participating.

### **3.4 Ethical Considerations**

Participants were assured about the ethical aspects of the project as well as confidentiality and anonymity. This was to protect their physical and mental well-being, as well as their political rights as citizens. Ransome (2013, p.39) states that the rights of participants are enshrined in the European Convention, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Data Protection Act. The researcher is therefore obligated to ensure that the respondents' identities are not published in the findings.

Silverman (2000, p.201) reminds researchers that they should always remember that, while they are doing their research, they are actually entering the private spaces of their participants and that the following issues should be considered:

- Informed consent, to ensure the participants have full knowledge of what is involved.
- Protect against harm and risk, if the study could hurt participants.
- Honesty and trust, ensuring the researcher is truthful in presenting data.
- Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity.

- Intervention and advocacy (how the researchers will respond if participants display harmful or illegal behaviour).

### **3.5 The Sampling Method**

Sampling means selecting a part to represent the whole. The non-probability sampling method, specifically the purposive sampling technique, was used. In this type of sampling, the sample depends entirely on the judgment of the researcher. The researcher approached the population with a purpose and knew whom to select. There was no scientific method of choosing a sample. In this method, participants are chosen because they illustrate some features that are of interest for a particular study (Silverman, 2000, p.104).

The target population of this research was women participating in cooperative programmes and there was no specific age group targeted. The group targeted was adults, married and unmarried, who reside in any local area within Sarah Baartman District Municipality.

The office of Local Economic Development in Makana Municipality was approached on April 2015, seeking a list of women cooperatives in the Sarah Baartman District. Some cooperatives on the list had some contact numbers and addresses and others did not. With no preference or order, the researcher managed to secure appointments with three groups of women participating in three cooperative projects. All three cooperatives are in Makana Municipality.

The sample size of eight participants in each group was the expected one. Two groups were fully represented during the time of the interview, while one member was absent from the third group.

### **3.6 The Data Collection Process Followed**

The participants interviewed were from Makana Municipality. The three cooperatives interviewed are: Ilithalethu Sewing and Beading Cooperative, Sinalo Poultry Cooperative, and Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative. Data collection was done in May 2015 for Ilithalethu Sewing Cooperative and in June 2015 for Sinalo Poultry Cooperative and Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative.

Before the interviews took place, the participants were informed about the details of the study and were further assured about the ethical aspects, such as confidentiality and anonymity. This provided the participants with what to expect from the interview and increased the likelihood of honesty. During the interviews, the participants were asked open-ended, neutral, and understandable questions. The researcher began with questions that the participants would understand easily and then proceeded with more difficult ones. This put the participants at ease and built up confidence and rapport.

Quite a range of skills and techniques were used in the interviews. Listening attentively to what was being said, without unnecessary interruptions, is one of the most important skills that was applied. This allowed the participants to express their experiences as fully as possible (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008).

Interviews took from one hour to one-and-a-half hours. At the end of the interview session, the researcher thanked the participants for their time and asked if there was anything they would like to add. This gave the respondents an opportunity to reflect on the issues that they had thought about, or believed were important, but had not been dealt with by the interviewer. This could lead to the discovery of new, unforeseen information.

During and immediately after each interview, the researcher made field notes regarding observations, thoughts and ideas about the interview, to help in data analysis processes.

### **3.7 Variables Investigated**

The variables measured in the study cover the aspects of the participants' personal profiles, business profile and resources required to run the cooperative.

#### **3.7.1 Personal profile**

The personal profiles of participants for this study consist of the information about who they are, their background, what they have done and achieved, as well as their skills and experience in running a cooperative.

- Age group
- Marital status
- Educational level
- Employment history
- Sources of income (other than the cooperative)

#### **3.7.2 Business profile**

The business profiles compiled assisted the researcher in understanding the details about the history, quality of human capital, management structure, and the sales performance of the cooperative.

- Registration under Cooperatives Act
- Year of starting cooperative
- Type of labour used (employees)
- Number of participants when started
- Number of participants at present

- Committee
- Management
- Sales performance

### **3.7.3 Resources**

Koopmans (2006) states that running a cooperative is a complex process and it requires significant resources. Lack of resources is one of the barriers to the sustainability of a cooperative. Below are the areas that the researcher touched on when doing the investigation:

- Ownership of assets such as land, including land or space
- Involvement in business associations
- Participation in trade affairs
- Freedom of movement
- Awareness of injustice

### **3.8 General Challenges**

Punctuality was one of the challenges in the study as, in all the groups, some participants did not arrive on time. It was explained that they had other jobs. Most of them are part-time employees of the Expanded Public Works Program (EPWP), a program sponsored by the Department of Public Works. They report three days a week, from 09h00 to 13h00. Although the agreed-upon starting time was 14h00, this was unattainable for different reasons. The interview sessions therefore started about an hour after the scheduled time. As a result, by the time the session started, some of those who arrived on time were impatient and had already commented that the interviews should be shortened.

In Makana, participants were not willing to spend a long time with the researcher due to the unstable political situation resulting from the lack of service delivery and the service

delivery protests that were prevalent at the time. They misinterpreted the researcher as seeking to uncover the problems within the municipality. Those were the problems such as maladministration, serious water outages and others. They were concerned that they might then be viewed as informers and be treated as outcasts in the community. They believed that they might also lose funding from their prospective funders. The researcher reminded them that the principle of confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained.

In Sinalo Poultry Cooperative and Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative, there was too much reliance on the group leadership. Some members only responded to questions when asked to do so by the researcher. They were used to the idea of a spokesperson. Probing remarks were thus used to elicit information from those who were dependent on group leaders to provide information.

This chapter has presented the data collection processes the researcher utilized while conducting the study. All the aspects of the research method stipulated in the content of the research have been followed correctly. The following chapter provides a detailed presentation of the research findings and their interpretation.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results and the interpretation of the data obtained from the study. The data is organised according to the objectives of the research, as well as the questions and emerging themes and issues. The study was conducted with three cooperatives situated in Makana Local Municipality in Sarah Baartman District Municipality.

### **4.2 Data Analysis Processes**

The researcher used a spiral process of data analysis. In a spiral process, the researcher moves in analytical circles rather than using a fixed linear approach. During the process, the researcher used the following approach: managing or organizing the data, generating categories, themes and patterns (Cresswell, 1998, p.142-165).

#### **4.2.1 Managing and Organizing the Data**

The researcher used a thematic analysis for the focus group data and managed and organized data into file folders. She then converted the text files into text units, such as a word or sentence, for analysis. During this process, the researcher translated recorded data from isiXhosa into English (Creswell, 1998, in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005, p.336).

#### **4.2.2 Trustworthiness of Data**

According to Rubin and Barbie (2008), ethics are central to the trustworthiness of any study even if they have not been applied for procedural purposes but are honestly engaged throughout the study. The researcher ensured that the ethical principles were

upheld throughout the study by being self-critical about her authority as a researcher, thus ensuring that her views as a researcher did not influence those of the participants.

The validity of the data was also ensured through follow up verification of the data by the participants. The researcher requested cellphone numbers of one executive member from each focus group in order to follow up and get clarity on some information, such as dates or names of other organizations that were mentioned during the interview.

### **4.3 The Biographical Details of Respondents**

The total number of respondents who participated in the study was twenty-four, that is, eight members from each cooperative. Nine participants were the executive membership and fifteen were ordinary members.

#### **4.3.1 The Cooperatives**

The cooperatives studied are Ilithalethu, which means in Isixhosa language “Our Light”. Sinalo, meaning “We have Hope” and Makana that is named by the local Municipality in which the cooperative operates. The respondents who were present during the time of initiating the cooperative all contributed towards the cooperative naming. The details of the cooperative are as follows:

##### **4.3.1.1 Ilithalethu Sewing Cooperative**

The Ilithalethu Sewing Cooperative is comprised of eleven members (ten women and one man). They do sewing and beading. Their program started in 2008 and the cooperative is registered under the terms of the Cooperatives Act 14 of 2005<sup>7</sup> (Section

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<sup>7</sup> In South Africa, for a cooperative to be recognised legally, an application has to be made in terms of the requirements of Cooperative Act 14 of 2005.

17). The respondents from Ilithalethu reported that they started out as unemployed members from the same church and grouped themselves with the goal of making a business. "We only had one sewing machine and we told ourselves that we will raise funds to purchase more sewing machines and buy more equipment that is needed for dressmaking and beading", said one of the respondents.

In 2012, all the sewing and dressmaking cooperatives in Makana received a call from the Department of Agriculture that there was equipment to support them. About seven of the local cooperatives responded to the call and the program was held at the Grahamstown City Hall. On the day in question, they were shown a truck full of dressmaking equipment. "We were told that we could not get the equipment on that day because some of it was left in Bhisho, due to the unavailability of transport. The mayor of Makana Municipality committed himself to assist in this matter to arrange transport to fetch the remaining equipment from Bhisho", said one of the respondents. The respondents reported that it was an organised programme, with government officials delivering speeches, meals being served and media coverage provided.

"Up until today, we only received one over-locker machine that is unusable", the respondent reported. An over-locker is a sewing machine that cannot sew the entire garment but only trims to prevent the edge of the fabric from coming loose. The machine received was also missing some components. Up until the time of compiling this research paper, not a single cooperative had received the rest of the equipment in question. Today, their program is sustained through the orders they get from the people in their community. They use the one sewing machine that they received through their fundraising and they rent a small space near the taxi rank.

Regarding the issue of funding, members of the cooperative stated that they could not apply for a loan as they do not have security. They approached several government departments for grants, but they did not receive positive responses. They were already skilled in dressmaking and beading when they formed the cooperative. The Department of Agriculture assisted with training in basic financial management skills and bookkeeping.

#### **4.3.1.2 Sinalo Poultry Cooperative**

The Sinalo Poultry Cooperative started in 2005 with funding from members' own pockets. It started as a family project (wife, husband, and a daughter) and grew within the community, reaching a total of eighteen members by 2009. The membership presently comprises of sixteen members, fourteen women and two men. Two members left, as they lost patience and went to look for employment elsewhere.

In 2010, members of this cooperative registered under the terms of the Cooperatives Act mentioned previously. They presently do not have a working space and are working at the chairperson's home in 'N' Street Tanti Location, Grahamstown. "We have made efforts to approach the Makana Municipality and we got a space at Kopke's Farm. We even obtained the funding from Komani District Centre to build a structure and the Centre is in the process of inspecting the site and construction should begin thereafter", said the chairperson of Sinalo Poultry Cooperative..

#### **4.3.1.3 Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative**

The Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative started in 2012 and was initiated by a group of eight church members who were also friends. The membership has grown to twelve, eight women and four men. "We had an idea for an agricultural cooperative, but we did not have money to start the cooperative. We then applied for funding from Uvimba Finance Limited but we did not qualify because we did not have security. We started fund-raising through a money savings club and managed to raise an amount of R8000.00 in 2013", reported one of the respondents from Makana Primary Cooperative.

The respondents reported that while doing the fundraising they were also seeking assistance with land for the purpose of crop and vegetable farming. The Department of Agriculture was in the process of assisting them in this regard. The implementation of the cooperative was delayed for many reasons, among them was the issue of the land to be utilised.

However, the group decided to buy six goats in 2013. The goats bred and the cooperative had twenty-three goats during June 2015. At the time of this study, they were operating in one of the members' yards. As has already been mentioned, the group had approached the Department of Agriculture for assistance and have been advised to recruit an experienced farmer for sustainability. If it is possible do this, they will be in a good position to access the Department's grant.

#### 4.4 Age of Participants

**Table 1 - Age Groups of Participants**

| <b>Age group</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|------------------|--------------|
| 26-31 years      | 2            |
| 32-37 years      | 4            |
| 38-43 years      | 6            |
| 44-49 years      | 7            |
| 50 years +       | 5            |

The age of the respondents summarized in Table 1 shows that a large number of respondents in the study are adults (above the youth age of thirty-five years). According to The Integrated Service Delivery Strategy - Department of Social Development, 2009 young people require better representation in the development programmes. Once their elders retire, younger members would then have enough experience to take the cooperative forward and this would contribute towards sustainability.

However, during recent years, quite a number of young people have taken an interest in enrolling in Further Education and Training (FET) colleges due to easy access to

National Students Financial Aid Scheme<sup>8</sup> (NSFAS). After finishing their studies, young people become employed in urban areas due to limited employment opportunities in Grahamstown.

#### 4.5 Education Levels

**Table 2- Education Levels of Respondents**

| Highest education level                    | Total |
|--|-------|
| Never attended school                      | 0     |
| Lower Primary Level(Grade 1-3)             | 24    |
| Higher Primary Level (Grade 4-7)           | 21    |
| Junior Secondary School Level (Grade 8-10) | 14    |
| Senior Secondary School Level(Grade 11-12) | 7     |
| Tertiary education                         | 2     |

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<sup>8</sup> NSFAS is a tertiary education loan/bursary scheme rendered by the government for students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Table 2 illustrates that the education levels are low amongst the respondents in the study. The table can be summarized as follows:

- All the respondents got an opportunity to enroll for lower primary school education.
- A large number managed to make it to higher primary, junior and senior secondary level.
- At least two respondents have post-high school education.

#### **4.6 The Management of Cooperatives**

All the cooperatives interviewed have committees that consisted of a chairperson, secretary, and treasurer. Each committee performs functions such as: gathering requirements, resources and working tools; assigning work; doing the paperwork and documentation, and motivating the members. In addition, Sinalo Cooperative also has an organizer.

All the respondents stated that they are all responsible for the day-to-day running of the cooperative. However, some of the members do not attend the project on a regular basis due to lack of self-discipline. Some members from Makana and Sinalo only work during the afternoons as they are also employed by the Extended Public Work Program (EPWP) where they work in the morning. In the meetings held to discuss the rules of the programme, it was stated that the members who only work half a day would not get full payment, whether stipend or wages.

To ensure the smooth running of the project, the participants develop weekly plans with duty rosters where they divide themselves into groups and assign duties for each group. Others mentioned that they develop rules that regulate their day-to-day operations and assign roles to each one of them. They put the rosters on a wall at the site to ensure that everyone knows their role. Others stated that they sit down to discuss and agree on what has to be done, and when and where it will be done.

#### 4.7 Skills of Cooperatives' Members

Table 3 below tabulates the types of skills that the respondents have. Eight respondents from Sinalo Poultry Cooperative and seven from Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative received training in business management and financial management. Of the seventeen respondents who had undergone training in bookkeeping, ten are from Sinalo, five are from Makana, and two come from Ilithalethu. Sinalo also had six participants who were trained in chicken breeding. None of the participants had received training in farming skills.

Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative even approached the Society for Protection and Care of Animals (SPCA) to get some general advice and pamphlets on how to look after their goats. Eleven participants from Sinalo and five from Makana have skills in marketing. Four respondents from Sinalo, two from Makana, and one from Ilithalethu, received training in conflict resolution and communication skills.

**Table 3 – Skills Possessed by the Participants**

| Type of Skill        | Total |
|----------------------|-------|
| Business management  | 15    |
| Financial management | 15    |
| Book-keeping         | 17    |
| Chicken breeding     | 6     |
| Farming              | 0     |

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Marketing            | 16 |
| Conflict resolution  | 7  |
| Communication skills | 7  |
| Dress-making         | 7  |
| Beading              | 6  |
| Computer skills      | 5  |

The respondents reported that they received training from the South African government, such as the Departments of Agriculture, Social Development, and Labour, as well as from NGOs such as the Masifunde Education Initiative. However, participants from Ilithalethu Sewing Cooperative stated that they had received training in dressmaking and beading from different training centres prior to the start of their cooperative. In other words, instead of the training promised to them, they did self-development. Out of five respondents who are in possession of computer skills, two gained the skills at tertiary institutions, and three received them from the high schools they attended.

The information illustrated in Table 3 shows that in all the cooperatives studied, most of the respondents have been trained to operate their respective cooperatives. Farming is one of the important outstanding skills that Sinalo and Makana cooperative still require. They need a qualified farmer to improve their chances of receiving government funding.

**4.8 Sources of Funding**

Only Sinalo Poultry Cooperative received funding from the government (Department of Social Development). The Department of Social Development also provides some supervision and accounts audits. The other two cooperatives are funded from the proceeds of the business. These cooperatives have a low level of productivity. As has already been mentioned, Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative was advised to

recruit a qualified farmer so that they stand a better chance of getting funding from the Department of Agriculture. Since they began the cooperative, members have collected funds by saving money from their own pockets. Therefore, Ilithalethu and Makana depend entirely on the proceeds of the business.

According to Magano (2001), in order for the project plans to be implemented effectively and to be sustainable, an injection of outside funds is required. Only one of the cooperatives studied was funded by the government. This may be regarded as a contributing factor towards the unsustainability of the cooperatives.

#### **4.9 Access to Markets**

Respondents from Sinalo Poultry Cooperative reported that they sell their products to Inyama Rama Butchery in Grahamstown. Ililithalethu Sewing Cooperative has a market for uniforms for the churches and local choirs. Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative reported that they have no market for their products, however, they get support from the community. They receive large orders during the December and June school holidays as families slaughter goats as part of their cultural practices, especially for boys' initiation.

#### **4.10 Cooperatives Assets**

Two cooperatives, Sinalo and Makana, had access to a fax machine and a computer. None of the cooperatives in the study had a landline, but they all use cellphones to communicate with fellow cooperative members, clients, and funders. In addition, Ililitha and Sinalo reported that they use public transport for their businesses.

Makana Agricultural Primary Cooperative did not have a vehicle for the cooperative. When their business requires the use of transport, they use the car that belongs to one of the members in their management team. Respondents from Ilithalethu reported that they have one table and two sewing machines that are in good condition. When the are

manufacturing large orders, they borrow rental space and machines from other projects and/or individuals so that they are able to meet the deadlines.

#### **4.11 Employment Creation and Poverty Reduction**

All the participants responded positively regarding the issue of poverty reduction. However, Makana and Ilithalethu all responded negatively to the question of employment creation, stating that they do not have a monthly income. They depend on social grants and their fortnight wages from EPWP which are paid fortnightly. They are still in the process of developing and, as a result, the income received from the cooperative sales is spent on paying the rent, buying the working equipment, and sometimes getting a small share if the sales are good. They also have some bank savings.

Six out of eight respondents from Sinalo Poultry Cooperative stated that their cooperative has contributed towards the community's employment creation, as they get a stipend of R600 per month. They mentioned that the community also benefits, as sometimes they need more people to assist, so they hire people from the community who are not members of the cooperative. They then make a deal to pay them with chicken livers, giblets, heads and feet, as well as R80.00 per day. The community members also get the benefit of buying on credit and paying the cooperative back later.

These findings confirm that although, to a certain extent, there is some dependency on government due to the recipients of social grants and EPWP, the participants have taken initiatives to develop themselves by fundraising to start the cooperatives. Thus, they have a sense of ownership and have future plans for the cooperatives.

#### **4.12 The Service Delivery**

Only four respondents, two from Ilithalethu, one from Sinalo, and one from Makana, gave details about service delivery problems in Makana, and all were young people

between the ages of thirty-two, thirty-four, thirty-five and thirty-seven respectively. The rest of the participants preferred not to respond to the question.

The four respondents reported that in Makana there are water outages. Sinalo operates in an area where residents still use the bucket system<sup>9</sup>. The allocation of houses under the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) is also slow. They also reported that they heard the municipality is under provincial administration, due to maladministration. They stated that they believe that service delivery problems are very closely linked with politics in Makana. As mentioned in Southall, (2003; 264), the respondents also stated that the in-fighting amongst leaders of the ruling party, the African National Congress, have impacted negatively on service delivery.

The issue of the lack of service delivery in Makana impacts not only on standards of living, health status and well-being, but also on the overall socio-political and socio-economic conditions of communities. It therefore also impacts on the overall quality of life of the community.

These respondents believed that, as a result of this situation, there will not be investments in Makana. Based on their reproductive and care-taking roles, the women in this cooperative are affected when socio-economic opportunities are scarce and services are inadequate. In the end, the provision of basic services does not only affect women's health and well-being, but also impacts on the quality of life of their family and the community as a whole (Kehler, 2001).

Given the circumstances mentioned above, it is clear that the women who participated in this study have taken an initiative in their development in order to become self-reliant. In order to ensure sustainability and to meet the goals of overall community

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<sup>9</sup> A bucket system refers to the type of sanitation whereby a bucket is used as a toilet in areas that do not have waste disposal plumbing

development, support from the government is also required. Furthermore, the following key aspects should be taken into account when considering a development project or program:

- Infrastructure (availability of working space)
- Availability of funding
- Skills development
- Provision of basic services
- Freedom of speech (many of the respondents did not feel free to speak out about issues of service delivery).

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Since 1994, South Africa has had the goal of creating a better life for all its citizens. Increasing economic growth and reducing the unemployment rate and inequality was considered the only way to achieve this objective. When a number of official economic programmes were employed by government, some of them involved the active participation in and empowerment of women and their role as leaders (National Development Plan 2030, 2012).

Maleko and Msuya (2015) argue that cooperatives seem to be the best instrument and therefore play a vital role in developing women and are contributing to women's empowerment in a number of ways such as: poverty reduction, social cohesion, and employment creation. In Chapter One of this research, the aims and objectives of this study are listed as follows:

- Assess the effectiveness of Women Cooperatives in empowering women.
- Assess the effectiveness of Women Cooperatives in reducing poverty.
- To make recommendations on what can be done to address the challenges identified in the study.

### **5.2 Conclusion**

Since 1994, the South African government has developed programmes and strategies that deal with poverty reduction, employment creation and closing the gap between the rich and the poor. The vulnerable and the previously disadvantaged have subsequently become the focus of attention.

As has already been stated in Chapter One of this study, the increasing rates of substance abuse in Sarah Baartman Region result in crimes against women and

children. These are crimes such as domestic violence, child abuse and neglect and HIV/AIDS. The empowerment of women through cooperatives was one of the programmes introduced to encourage women to take the initiative in improving their socio-economic well-being.

United Nations Population Fund reported women as the poorest members of society, despite playing a prominent role in the development processes. Empowering them and improving their social, political, cultural, economic and health status is of high importance when eradicating poverty (United Nations Population Fund 2014).

The aim of this study is to determine whether women cooperatives have contributed to the development of women and poverty reduction in South Africa focusing specifically on Sarah Baartman District Municipality, Eastern Cape, between 2004 and 2014. From the study, several conclusions can be drawn.

The three cooperatives studied are all up and running. A number of the respondents received training in different ways and from different institutions and some have become self-empowered. This shows that these women are thirsty for knowledge and development and have not merely waited for the government to assist but have used their own initiative.

Out of the three cooperative groups interviewed, only one receives a monthly stipend and also makes a profit. This means that the aim of women's economic emancipation has been achieved to a minimum extent. The government has a responsibility to assign dedicated and knowledgeable personnel to the cooperatives so that they will be able to notice the changing demands of the global economy and provide immediate intervention to ensure their sustainability.

Other basic services such as the provision of decent housing might ease the financial burden on women as some have to spend the little money they earn on paying rental for their houses. Also, providing them with housing will improve their self-esteem and provide them with a level of dignity.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Having taken into consideration that women do encounter challenges in running a cooperative, the following recommendations directed specifically to the government and its stakeholders are then made to sustain the cooperatives.

#### **5.3.1 Funding**

Even though the government might be offering economic development to women by providing programmes, strategies, and policies, in practical terms, many women still struggle to access funds. There has to be means devised to accommodate those women who do not meet the requirements to secure such funding.

Based on the economic backgrounds of the cooperative members, it appears that most are dependent on social grants and have a responsibility to maintain their families financially. From the information gathered, it is clear that the cooperatives studied have thrown their hopes on the the government and the municipality. It can then be recommended that they should also make a turn-around and look at other organization such as the Non-Governmental Organization as well as the Faith Based Organizations for funding and support.

#### **5.3.2 Resources**

Limited access to resources is one of the major obstacles in sustaining a cooperative. In many countries, women lack access to land, their level of education is low, and they also do not have the experience to run a business. In South Africa, all government departments and stakeholders given a mandate to lead and promote cooperatives by the government should ensure that all the necessary resources are made available before the implementation of the cooperative programme.

The lack of access to resources, such as land for the cooperative to operate on, emerged as an impediment to the sustainability of cooperatives in the findings of this research. This is because, in most cases, land and property are owned by men. Lack of transport to distribute products in order to make marketing possible also emerged as a difficulty. This is based on the belief that, if the cooperatives had their own transport, they would not be dependent on their suppliers for the delivery of raw materials. It is believed that this delays the entire process; delaying production means delaying sales (Dessalew 2014).

### **5.3.3 Service Delivery**

Service delivery plays an important role in the sustainability of economic development. It has transpired in this study that, in some areas where the cooperatives operate there is still a lack of provision of basic services. For example, there is inadequate water supply, the continued use of the bucket system, and slow delivery of RDP houses. The history of economic development has shown that countries that cannot provide services in their municipalities struggle to succeed in economic development compared to those with adequate service delivery.

Since 2013, Makana Municipality has been in crisis due to the non-delivery of basic services. There have been reports regarding this crisis in the newspapers, especially the Daily Dispatch and Grocotts Mail. Intervention by the Eastern Provincial Government led to the municipality being placed under administration. None of the projects that were under the municipal plan continued and a number of women cooperatives was also affected (Mdlongwa 2014).

The women in Makana believe that, as a result of this situation, there will not be any investments in their cooperative. Based on their reproductive and caretaking roles, they are most affected when socio-economic opportunities are scarce and services are inadequate. In the end, the provision of basic services does not only affect women's

health and well-being, but also impacts on the quality of life of their families and the community as a whole.

#### **5.3.4 Skills Development**

It appeared in the study that not all women received skills development for use in their respective cooperatives. Continuous skills development can create positive change in the sustainability of the cooperatives. According to Matakanye (2000), the majority of training needs should be oriented towards human development, as this is a foundation of sustainability. The funding organization has a responsibility to ensure that the skills received by the cooperative members are revised regularly.

Hurley (1990) asserts that the attention given to training and improving people's skills and managerial abilities can be very effective, although it requires a longterm perspective. It is therefore very important for practitioners within the funding organizations and government departments to assist individual members within the cooperatives to undergo some skills training to acquire more knowledge about the project development and the associated role. Based on the study conducted, the researcher suggests that all the members receive full training in all the skills that are essential for the effective operation of the cooperative.

Overall, it can be concluded that women cooperatives provide beneficial services to the communities studied. The study reveals that some women have been able to develop their lives, their families, and the community at large. Some are fully satisfied with the benefits from their cooperative and are also economically independent. Therefore, as mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, it can be seen that cooperatives play a very important role in the empowerment of women. It is clear that women have taken the initiative in their development in order to be self-reliant.

However, in order to ensure sustainability and to meet the goal of development, support from the government is required. Some challenges that hinder development are provided in the recommendations section of this chapter.

### **5.5 Areas for Further Studies**

The study was conducted with three out of approximately seventy-five cooperatives in Sarah Baartman District Municipality. The representative sample was selected from a population in one local municipality. This means that the results of the study might not be a true reflection of what is taking place in all the cooperatives of this municipality. This reveals the need for further studies to be conducted focusing on other cooperatives situated in this municipality.

The study has not shown ways in which government departments and other organizations that have a mandate for women's developments through cooperatives, have provided information through awareness programmes to the communities.

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**APPENDICES**

Consent from participants (Sinalo Poultry Cooperative)

I, .....give informed consent to become a participant in this study.

Contact Details:

Address.....

Contact numbers.....

Signature..... Date.....

Consent from participants (Makana Agricultural Cooperative)

I, .....give informed consent to become a participant in this study.

Contact Details:

Address.....

Contact numbers.....

Signature..... Date.....

Consent from participants (Ilithalethu Sewing Cooperative)

I, .....give informed consent to become a participant in this study.

Contact Details:

Address.....

Contact numbers.....

Signature..... Date.....

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

### SECTION A

#### 1. Demographic information of participants

1.1 Age group .....

1.2 Gender.....

1.3 Marital status.....

1.4 Race.....

1.5 Home language.....

1.6 Education level

| Highest education level                 | No. of respondents |
|---|--------------------|
| Never been to school                    |                    |
| Lower Primary Level<br>(Grade 1-3).     |                    |
| Higher Primary Level<br>(Grade 4-7).    |                    |
| Junior Secondary Level<br>(Grade 8-10). |                    |
| Senior Secondary Level<br>(Grade 11-12) |                    |
| Tertiary education                      |                    |

## **SECTION B**

### **1. Financial status**

1.1 Number of people in household.....

1.2 Number of people employed.....

1.3 Number of people unemployed.....

1.4 Number of social grant recipients.....

## **SECTION C**

### **Background of the cooperative**

When was the cooperative initiated?

How was it initiated? (by a group, by an individual, by a sponsor etc.)

What was the motivation to become a member of the cooperative?

How many members were part of initiating the cooperative?

How many members are active presently?

Are there members who have left the group, if yes, what was their reason for leaving the group?

What is the nature of the cooperative i.e. what is it producing?

## **SECTION D**

### **Skills and Training**

What skills do you have to operate the cooperative?

If yes, what type of skills do you have?

If no, has the cooperative management made efforts to look for the stakeholders that can provide training on the skills required?

**SECTION D**

**Cooperative management**

1. Who is responsible for the day to day running of the project to ensure the smooth operation of the cooperative?

.....  
.....

3. Who is responsible for making decisions in the project?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4. On what criteria was the person/persons taking decisions in the project selected?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. Who oversees the implementation of the decisions?

.....  
.....  
.....

6. How often do you hold project meetings?

.....

**Section E**

1. Has the cooperative program contributed to employment creation and poverty reduction in your community?

.....  
.....

2. To what extent does the cooperative programme meet your needs?

.....  
.....

4. Do you get support from the government in terms of the following?

- Promotion of cooperative growth and development.....
- Supervision and audit of primary cooperatives' accounts.....
- Provision of technical advice to the cooperative movement.....
- Provision of training and education of staff, management committee members and members of primary cooperatives.....

5. Do you get support from the community?.....

6. What are the general challenges encountered by the participants?.....

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION***

